DECLASSIFIED EXCISE POL 14 VIET S

XR SOC 12 VIET

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

E

7

CONFIDENTIAL

Action

25781

1966 JUN 26 AM 3 42

FE

Info

SS
G
SP
SAH
L
H
IO
P
NSC
INR
AID
HSR

VV MJA199JIA104
PP RUEHC
DE RUMJIR 3150A/1 1770700
ZNY CCCCC
P 260630Z
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5775
INFO RUHLHQ/CINCPAC PRIORITY 2975
RUMNMF/CG III MAF PRIORITY
ZEN/AMCONSUL HUE PRIORITY 779
STATE GRNC
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 JUNE 26

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [signature] DATE 10/6/81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

III MAF PASS AMCONSUL DANANG 513 FOR POLAD THOMSEN

1. IN LONG CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF NIGHT JUNE 25, NGUYEN QUANG LAM (NORTHERN CATHOLIC POLITICAL LEADER AND HAD SOME VERY INTERESTING THINGS TO SAY ON SUBJECT PRESENT CATHOLIC ATTITUDE TOWARD GOVERNMENT, BUDDHISTS, ELECTIONS AND EACH OTHER.

AND CLOSE TO GENERAL KY, WAS IN MUCH HIGHER SPIRITS THAN IS HIS USUAL WONT, APPARENTLY DUE TO GREATLY IMPROVED PROSPECTS

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 3150A/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L
OF BOTH CATHOLIC CITIZENS BLOC AND KY GOVERNMENT.

2. ELECTIONS.

A. SAID THAT AT RECENT MEETING OF CATHOLIC HIERARCHY IN DALAT, ARCHBISHOP BINH HAD ISSUED WRITTEN ORDER THAT PRESIDUM CATHOLIC CITIZENS BLOC (CCB) WAS TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR CONDUCTING ACTIVE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN ON BEHALF CATHOLIC CHURCH. CATHOLICS STILL BELIEVED THAT ELECTIONS WERE PREMATURE BUT WERE DETERMINED THAT "THEY WOULD NOT BE BEATEN" AND, EVEN IF ELECTIONS SHOULD FOR ANY REASON NOT TAKE PLACE, CRANKING UP AND TESTING OF CATHOLIC MACHINERY WOULD NOT BE WASTED EFFORT.

B. INSTRUCTIONS HAD BEEN PREPARED BY CCB ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF ELECTIONS (E.G. HOW TO PUT TOGETHER LIST OF CANDIDATES IN DISTRICTS WHERE CATHOLIC STRENGTH PREPONDERANT, HOW TO PUT TOGETHER LISTS IN DISTRICTS WHERE CATHOLICS NOT DOMINANT, HOW TO FORM COALITIONS, HOW TO CONDUCT CAMPAIGN, HOW TO VOTE) AND WERE BEING DISTRIBUTED BY PRIESTS, MEMBERS OF CCB PRESIDIUM,

CONFIDENTIAL

(2)

MISROUTED BY USIA

DECLASSIFIED

OTHER PRIESTS AND CERTAIN LAY MEMBERS HAD BEEN SENT INTO SEVERAL PROVINCES TO MAKE CONTACT WITH CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP THERE AND WORK OUT AGREED PLAN FOR ELECTIONS. (DANANG, CAN THO AND VINH LONG AND DINH TUONG PROVINCES WERE MENTIONED AS EXAMPLES). THERE WOULD BE HELD IN COMING WEEK IN KEY DISTRICTS OF GIA DINH

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 3150A/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L
AND BIEN HOA PROVINCES A SERIES OF ELECTION SEMINARS CONDUCTED BY SEVEN OR EIGHT LAYMEN AND TWO OR THREE PRIESTS. (THIS CONFIRMED BY ANNOUNCEMENT IN JUNE 26 SAIGON POST). [redacted] NAMED GO VAP, HOC MAN AND TAN BINH DISTRICTS IN GIA DINH AND HO NAI DISTRICT IN BIEN HOA AS BEING CENTERS OF GREATEST CATHOLIC STRENGTH AROUND SAIGON. IN SAIGON CHURCH HAD CERTAIN STRENGTH IN EIGHTH DISTRICT (WHERE THERE IS LARGE PROPORTION OF REFUGEES) BUT NOT TOO MUCH WELL-ORGANIZED SUPPORT ELSEWHERE BECAUSE INHABITANTS OF SAIGON GENERALLY NOT RESPONSIVE TO EITHER CATHOLIC OR BUDDHIST DISCIPLINE.

C [redacted] EXPECTED THAT CATHOLICS WOULD FORM COALITIONS WITH CAO DAI AND HOA HAO BUT NOT WITH VNQDD OR DAI VIET.

[redacted] WAS VERY NEGATIVE ON IDEA OF WORKING WITH VNQDD OR DAI VIET BUT DID NOT STATE SPECIFIC OBJECTIONS. HE DID NOT COMMENT WHEN ASKED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF COOPERATING WITH GOVERNMENT PARTY, SHOULD ONE EMERGE.

3. CATHOLICS. [redacted] SAID THAT IN AFTERMATH OF SUCCESSFUL JUNE 12 DEMONSTRATION CATHOLICS WERE ONCE AGAIN SOLIDLY UNITED. WHEN QUERIED, HE DENIED REPORTS THAT THERE WAS SEPARATE CATHOLIC GROUP [redacted] WITH STRONG

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 3150A/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L
SOUTHERN PARTICIPATION WHICH DID NOT INTEND COOPERATE WITH CCB. HE SAID RUMORS THAT ALL SOUTHERN MEMBERS OF CCB PRESIDIUM HAD RESIGNED WERE UNTRUE AND CITED NAMES OF TWO SOUTHERN MEMBERS [redacted] OPPOSITION OF [redacted] AND SOME OF THOSE AROUND HIM TO JUNE 12 DEMONSTRATIONS HAD BEEN WITHOUT EFFECT, EVEN THOSE YOUTH GROUPS FROM [redacted] PARISH HAD PARTICIPATED (EMBOFFS SAW SEVERAL GROUPS IN JUNE 12 PARADE

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

b-1
ed

-3- 5775, JUNE 26, FROM SAIGON (SECTION 1 OF 2)

WHOSE BANNERS STILL BORE NAME OF [ ] YOUTH ORGANIZATION). OPPOSITION TO GVN AND IMPRESSION HE HAD GIVEN OF LENDING AT LEAST MORAL SUPPORT TO [ ] STRUGGLE MOVEMENT HAD ALSO BACKFIRED AND SEVERAL OF SIGNERS OF MAY 25 COMMUNIQUE OF FRONT OF CITIZENS OF VARIOUS RELIGIONS HAD NOW DISAVOWED POLICY EXPRESSED THEREIN. [ ] HIMSELF, WAS NO LONGER OPPOSED TO CCB, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF DECISION BY ARCHBISHOP TO CONFIDE ELECTORAL PREPARATIONS TO PRESIDIUM.

4. BUDDHISTS.

A. [ ] EXPRESSED POINT OF VIEW WHICH HAD EARLIER APPEARED EDITORIALLY IN [ ] NEWSPAPER [ ] NAMELY THAT GVN SHOULD NOT CRUSH BUDDHISTS. HE WONDERED WHETHER THERE WAS NOT SOMETHING EMBASSY COULD DO TO BRING TWO SIDES TOGETHER. EMBOFF REPLIED

PAGE 5 RUMJIR 3150A/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L
THAT AMBASSADOR HAD MADE POSITION OF USG QUITE CLEAR TO THICH TAM CHAU, URGING UPON HIM AND GOVT THE DESIRABILITY OF FINDING COMMON GROUND. [ ] IN ANY EVENT, WE DID NOT HAVE IMPRESSION GVN HAD INTENTION OF CRUSHING BUDDHISTS.

B. [ ] SAID THAT SPLIT IN INSTITUTE RANKS WAS, IN HIS OPINION, A REAL ONE; THAT THE REPORTS ABOUT AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN TAM CHAU AND TRI QUANG WERE FALSE: AND THAT IT HAD BEEN ONLY AFTER CONSIDERABLE PERSUASION BY [ ] THAT TAM CHAU HAD EVEN AGREED GO SEE TRI QUANG. HE AGREED THAT UNTIL BUDDHISTS COULD AGREE ON COMMON POLICY, AND ONE WHICH DID NOT INCLUDE DEMAND FOR RESIGNATION THIEU AND KY, THERE WAS LITTLE HOPE FOR "HONORABLE SETTLEMENT" OF DISPUTE BETWEEN THEM AND GVN.

LODGE

NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O AT 4 A.M., JUNE 26.
PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, USIA, NSA 4 A.M., JUNE 26.

DECLASSIFIED

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

7 CONFIDENTIAL

Action VV MJA202JIA106
PP RUEHC
FE DE RUMJIR 3150A/2 1770700
ZNY CCCCC
Info P 260630Z
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
SS TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5775
G INFO RUHLHQ/CINCPAC PRIORITY 2975
SP RUMNMF/CG III MAF PRIORITY
SAH ZEN/AMCONSUL HUE PRIORITY 779
L STATE GRNC
H BT
IO C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 JUNE 26
P III MAF PASS AMCONSUL DANANG 513 FOR POLAD THOMSEN
NSC
INR
AID
RSR

25782

1966 JUN 26 AM 4 06

b-1
ad

5. GVN [redacted] FELT THAT GVN WAS PRESENTLY IN VERY STRONG POSITION AND HAD BETTER PROSPECTS FOR REAL PROGRESS IN WINNING WAR AND REBUILDING COUNTRY THAN ANY GOVERNMENT SINCE FALL OF DIEM. HOWEVER, MANNER IN WHICH RESHUFFLE OF MAJOR MILITARY COMMANDS AND CABINET WAS BEING HANDLED GAVE CATHOLICS SOME CONCERN.

A. KY HAD WANTED GENERAL NGUYEN BAO TRI TO TAKE OVER MINISTRY INFORMATION EVER SINCE SECOND MONTH HIS GOVERNMENT WHEN HE REALIZED INADEQUACY OF CHINH. CATHOLICS HAD PERSUADED TRI TO REJECT KY'S FIRST PROPOSAL, MADE WHILE TRI WAS COMMANDER OF SEVENTH DIVISION, BECAUSE THEY HOPED TO SEE TRI GET III CORPS

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 3150A/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L
COMMAND. AGAIN IN RESHUFFLE OF LAST FEBRUARY KY HAD APPROACHED TRI TO TAKE OVER INFORMATION. TRI HAD ACCEPTED BUT THEN CHANGED MIND AFTER CATHOLICS HAD ASKED HIM STAY ON AS III CORPS COMMANDER. THIS TIME TRI HAD ACCEPTED AND HAD FELT HE WAS DOING RIGHT THING, DID NOT CONSIDER IT TO BE IN ANY WAY DEMOTION. [redacted] STILL FELT IT WAS MISTAKE AND WAS NOT SATISFIED WITH WHAT TRI HAD TOLD HIM OF IMPORTANCE OF WORK TO BE DONE IN POL WAR AND INFORMATION FIELDS. HE BELIEVED THERE MUST BE SOME ADDITIONAL REASON FOR TRI'S SHIFT TO NEW POST BUT WAS NOT SURE WHAT IT WAS. (COMMENT: EMBOFF HAD IMPRESSION [redacted] THOUGHT TRI WOULD BE USED TO DIRECT GVN POLITICAL CAMPAIGN BUT DID NOT WISH COME OUT AND SAY SO; ALSO THAT [redacted] AND CATHOLICS NOT VERY HAPPY OVER THIS ROLE FOR TRI).

DECLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL

B. TRAN VAN DO WOULD NO LONGER BE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THIS WOULD MAKE MAKE MANY CATHOLICS HAPPY, ALTHOUGH APOSTOLIC DELEGATE HAD BEEN HORRIFIED WHEN TOLD BY ___ THAT KY PLANNED TO TAKE OVER FOREIGN AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO FROM DO. MANY CATHOLICS FELT DO MUCH TOO CLOSE TO BUDDHIST INSTITUTE AND WERE WORRIED ABOUT HIM SERVING AS FOREIGN MINISTER. EMBOFF ASKED WHAT ___ EVIDENCE ___ HAD OF DO'S CONNECTIONS WITH INSTITUTE AND ___ ADMITTED IT ALL WENT BACK TO TIME OF QUAT GOVT AND THEY HAD b-1 ed

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 3150A/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L
NOTHING MORE RECENT. EMBOFF EXPLAINED AT SOME LENGTH THE SERIOUS DANGERS OF REPLACING VERY WELL QUALIFIED, EXPERIENCED, RESPECTED FOREIGN MINISTER LIKE DO WITH SOMEONE WHO HAD VIRTUALLY NO KNOWLEDGE OF OUTSIDE WORLD, AND WENT ON TO SAY THIS WAS PROBABLY EASIER FOR SOMEONE LIKE APOSOTOLIC DELEGATE OR FOREIGN DIPLOMAT TO UNDERSTAND THAN FOR THOSE WHOSE EXPERIENCE LIMITED PRIMARILY TO VIETNAMESE INTERNAL AFFAIRS. EMBASSY HAD NEVER SEEN INDICATION THAT DO IN ANY WAY FAVORED NEUTRALIST SOLUTION TO WAR IN VIETNAM, IF THAT WAS WHAT CATHOLICS FEARED.
PROFESSED TO HAVE CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF QUESTION AND PROMISED THAT KY WOULD BE NOTIFIED CATHOLICS NO LONGER HAD ANY OBJECTION TO DO STAYING ON AS FOREIGN MINISTER.
ALSO SAID THAT DO DID NOT GET ALONG WELL WITH OTHER GENERALS IN DIRECTORATE, NOT JUST KY. KY WAS SUSPICIOUS OF DO AND ABOUT ONE MONTH AGO HAD CALLED DO IN TO QUESTION HIM)

KY FELT TWO OF THEM MIGHT BE PLOTTING AGAINST HIM. EMBOFF EXPLAINED RELATIONSHIP TO ___ SATISFACTION).

C. SNAG IN ANNOUNCING NEW CABINET CHANGES WAS STIPULATION BY NEW MINISTER OF EDUCATION TRUONG THAT HIS FAMILY MUST BE BROUGHT FROM HUE TO SAIGON BEFORE HIS APPOINTMENT ANNOUNCED AND FAILURE OF NIA DIRECTOR BONG TO REPLY TO TWO TELEGRAMS WHICH HAD BEEN SENT TO HIM IN UNITED STATES ASKING WHETHER OR NOT HE ACCEPTED POST IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE.

LODGE

NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O AT 4:25 A.M., JUNE 26.
PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, USIA, NSA 4:25 A.M., JUNE 26.

DECLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL